

Massachusetts Conference, United Church of Christ
215th Annual Meeting 2014
2014 GREEN CONGREGATION AWARDS

LEVEL ONE AWARD

Union Congregational Church, UCC
North Reading, MA

<http://www.nrucc.net/>

Union Congregational Church's Green Team began its work in the fall of 2012 and includes diverse members of the congregation including three youth members. They implemented a single stream recycling program, conducted energy audits, updated inefficient lighting and improved insulation. They invested in high efficiency lighting in their Fellowship Hall, pre-school and Sunday school areas. Energy incentives from Reading Municipal Light helped fund the project. The parsonage was converted from an old oil furnace to higher efficiency natural gas. The Green Team submits monthly Green Tips to the church electronic newsletter, maintains a bulletin board of environmental information and is assisting members in reducing junk mail and recycling cell phones. They built a rain garden, cleaned heating and cooling coils, and assisted in the study and replacement of inefficient refrigeration units throughout the church. The Young Disciples and Youth Ministry groups hosted a speaker and film. The Sunday School started a tradition of a craft and lesson on Earth Day. The congregation has been supportive and their feedback has spawned many new ideas. One of the most visible accomplishments has been their work at the annual Frosty's Fair. The Green Team manned recycling stations and handled all trash for the event. Hundreds of pounds of previously trashed items were saved and recycled. Compostable bowls were used reusable shopping bags were handed out. Members of the entire church are very proud of being greener. Union Congregational members look forward to new green projects like an "unplugged" camping weekend and phasing out Styrofoam.

First Congregational Church, UCC
Holliston, MA

<http://www.hollistonucc.org/>

The members of First Congregational Church's environmental team offered a three part series on the environment before the Lenten season began. The Rev. Jim Antal spoke as part of their Environmental Agape Lenten series. An environmental children's sermon was also part of their Lenten season. The church has replaced light bulbs, improved windows in the Sunday school area, and improved weather stripping to cut down on energy usage. First Congregational installed programmable thermostats and replaced incandescent bulbs with CFLs. Their pipes, walls, ceilings, doors and water heaters are all insulated. They use environmentally sensitive cleaning products. They continue to recycle their paper, bottles and cans and no longer use Styrofoam, washing their cups after each coffee hour. They now send their newsletter, *Gabriel's Trumpet*, out electronically. They carpool to the annual women's retreat. They rang their church bell 350 times in support of 350.org. The environmental team is currently working on the steps for Level two.

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LEVEL TWO AWARD

**First Congregational Church, UCC
Shrewsbury, MA**

<http://www.fccsm.org/>

First Congregational Church of Shrewsbury's Earth Stewardship Ministry has worked hard to complete the steps necessary for recognition as a Level Two Green Congregation. Their work included the installation of programmable thermostats, conversion from incandescent to CFL's, insulation of the church where necessary, weather-stripping of all entrances, insulation of all hot water pipes, shifting to electronic media for the great majority of church communications, the use of reusable dishes and utensils for the vast majority of church activities, LED exit signs, sponsoring walk/bike/carpool to church days, shift to organic lawn care, shift to green cleaning products, development of a car pool system for church activities, establishing guidelines for using blinds and shades to help regulate temperature and encouraging the practice, and purchasing wind-generated green electricity from our local utility (SELCO). In addition to these steps, they continued to sponsor environmental films and lectures, sponsored weekly events during Mission 4/1 Earth, and continue to focus a Sunday worship service near Earth Day on the environment and earth stewardship with an Earth Sunday Fair following the service. The Earth Stewardship Ministry has applied for Mass ReLeaf grants and has organized tree plantings. They and are looking forward to working on Level Three Green Congregation action steps. The First Congregational Church of Shrewsbury Earth Stewardship Ministry enthusiastically supports the Green Congregation initiative and is honored to receive Level Two recognition. They also recognize that the work is far from finished and continue to work and pray for transformative change in the use of energy and environmental stewardship.